

DIVISION LEVEL SOCIAL MEDIA

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General Studies

by

KRISTYN M. FELIX, MAJOR, USA
B.A., University of California, Santa Barbara, California, 2003

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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Name of Candidate: Major Kristyn Felix

Thesis Title: Division Level Social Media

Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
Lowell E. Solien, M.S.

_____, Member
Marlyn R. Pierce, Ph.D.

_____, Member
Steven A. Boylan, M.A.

Accepted this 12th day of June 2015 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

DIVISION LEVEL SOCIAL MEDIA, by Major Kristyn Felix, 89 pages.

Social media has become an accepted form of communication in society including the U.S. Army. Currently U.S. Army units of all sizes have their own social media pages on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or a combination of all three sites. Social media continues to evolve and change at a very rapid speed. The constant shift in civilian social media practices is changing the way U.S. Army divisions handle social media. The focus of this paper is on how division level social media is executed and how it is adapting to the ever-changing civilian social media trends. Division level social media is at the crosshairs of upper operational level and lower strategic levels of operations. Division level social media programs have the capability to reach up to 25,000 Soldiers and their family members. Division level social media has the ability to reach a wide variety of people but is the divisions use this capability being maximized? In this day and age, more and more people are connecting to social media. With the influx of people on social media, divisions have a large number of people that could potentially become followers.

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ACRONYMS

LOE	Lines of Effort
MOE	Measures of Effectiveness
MOP	Measures of Performance
OPSEC	Operational Security
PAO	Public Affairs Officer—Public Affairs Office
PAR	Public Affairs Representative

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Public Affairs fulfills the Army's obligation to keep the American people and the Army informed, and helps to establish the conditions that lead to confidence in America's Army and its readiness to conduct operations in peacetime, conflict and war.

— U.S. Army Public Affairs Mission Statement 2014

The Army Public Affairs Office projects information across a plethora of platforms. Prior to social media, information consisted of print, radio, television, and websites. Websites did not have the ability to start shared conversations. People were able to absorb news and information but did not have a way to start conversations. Social media enabled people to connect through Internet connections and have shared understanding of information. In 2009, the U.S. Army formally sanctioned units and service members to participate in social media.¹ Since 2009, the Army's Public Affairs Office has added social media to their media platforms.

Social media emerged in the 1990s; the term social media was not used at the time. Social networking, the pre-cursor to social media, began in the 1990s.² Later the term social media became predominant and is the term used throughout this paper. Regardless of the name, social media had an immediate effect on how people shared news and ultimately demonstrated the potential to shape world opinion. Social media changed society through people sharing their opinions and thoughts on current events with the world. An example of this is seen in a 2010 Facebook post from Egypt. The Facebook post revealed the Egyptian police beating a man in public.³ A man living in

Dubai saw the post of the beaten Egyptian and felt compelled to create a Facebook page for the public to inform people of Egyptian police brutality. The Facebook page was an outlet for people around the world to see what was happening in Egypt. This is one of the many stories that started the merge of social media, world news and opinion into one platform.

Prior to social media, information and news was not shared as quickly because there was not an instant connection to social media websites. Information flowed from a news source to television, radio, print, and Internet sites. They lacked the ability to instantly comment and share the news stories. Social media has enabled people to connect with others on topics around the world. Social media has also enabled news to travel faster than it has in the past.

An example would be the same person living in Dubai watching the documentary or news story on television. Television broadcasted news would create the same platform for the man in Dubai but he would not be able to share his thoughts as quickly. By the time he wrote a letter to the editor or even posted a comment to a website, his comments could be overcome by events. The time lapse between the story posted on social media versus television or print decreases. People with social media accounts are able to post stories as they are happening instead of waiting for the next newscast or news publication to come out. Social media has also decreased the time between breaking news and people reading about it because it can be accessed from cell phones and tablets. In today's society, 58 percent of American society has smart phones which are able to access social media.⁴ Smart phones and other devices make social media easier and faster to access from just about anywhere. Additionally, social media allows other people to share an

experience instantaneously and add to the conversation. Social media shares news and information faster than print, televised, or radio news. American society spends over 43 minutes a day looking at social media versus 19 minutes a day reading.⁵ People are checking social media more than reading magazines, newspapers, or books. This statistic shows Americans are more interested in social media now more than ever.

At the end of 2014 it was estimated 74 percent of Americans use social media on a daily basis.⁶ This is a large amount of people who look to social media sites for updates on their interests and the latest events worldwide. Civilians and military members are using social media to promote themselves, their businesses, and to keep up with current events. Divisional units have a vested interest in posting their news and stories where a large audience will potentially see it. The ability to distribute information across a large audience enables divisions to stay connected to their followers.

The Army started to use social media as a part of public affairs mediums in addition to print, news, radio, and other methods. As social media increased its popularity, the U.S. Army published the first Social Media Handbook. The U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* first version came out in 2010. Since then, four updated versions have been published on an annual basis. Units now use social media to keep their service members and family members alike informed. Since 2010, Army social media sites are able to reach over one billion people on a daily basis.⁷ The large number of social media users check their Facebook accounts more than once a day, which requires Army social media to constantly be updated.

Many businesses and companies use social media as a means of reaching their current and potential customers. Websites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are

examples of social media platforms that do not have a user fee. Many public businesses offer free Wi-Fi connections for their customers that enable them to stream data from that location. Wi-Fi came onto the technology scene in the 1980s and became integrated into computer technology in 1999.⁸ In 1999, computer companies around the world began installing Wi-Fi hardware or “air cards” into all laptops manufactured.⁹ With laptops enabled to connect to Wi-Fi, social media was able to be shared from home and anywhere a Wi-Fi connection was offered. Wi-Fi has been a critical factor for social media. The instant connection enables social media to move anywhere there is a Wi-Fi connection. The combination of a free social media account and various potentially free Wi-Fi connections make using social media free for many people to use.

Civilian social media sites are free services to private businesses, community groups, military units, and anyone else interested in using it. However, social media is not completely free for divisional units. Unlike a personal social media page, which is updated and checked at a person’s leisure or a spare moment during the day. Divisional social media is updated and checked as part of a job during the workday. An assigned service member or group of service members on a daily basis updates divisional social media pages. Updating social media constitutes a paid divisional PAO staff position and thus makes Army unit’s social media not entirely free. All of the resources a division PAO staff uses are government property and were purchased as a part of their operating budget. The social media manager or group is responsible for posting pictures, stories, and links to social media pages. Every divisional unit executes their social media plan differently as explained in chapter 4.

As of January 2014, 74 percent of all people who use the Internet also use social media.¹⁰ The highest concentration of adults (men and women) who use social media is between the ages of 18 to 29.¹¹ The 18 to 29 age demographic makes up over 60 percent of the U.S. Army. Currently 66.3 percent of the Army is between the ages of 18 and 30.¹² This is important because undoubtedly, some if not most of the U.S. Army adults between the ages of 18 and 30 use social media. This equates to approximately 299,676 U.S. Army personnel who use social media. In the aggregate well over half of the U.S. Army is connected to social media for personal use and news feeds.

Understanding social media statistics equates to companies abilities to understand the people who are looking at their social media sites and market to them. Businesses and companies are able to capitalize on these statistics through marketing campaigns and web analysis tools. This enables businesses the ability to correlate social media with profit or other desired output.

Social Media

Most Army units of all sizes have their own social media page of sorts—Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or a combination of all three. As divisional units become more connected, what considerations should be taken into account with regard to positive or negative effects on the organization? Most social media unit sites are open to the public, which enables anyone to follow their posts at any given time. With more people following divisional units, is the intended demographic being reached or is it a random following? The intended demographic is different across every divisional unit because every unit has a different measure of reach and success. Chapter 4 will provide detail on demographics. As an example, the 82nd Airborne Division Facebook page has had an

increase of 24,036 followers from September 15, 2014 to October 30, 2014.¹³ Of the 24,036 new followers, how many of them were sought out to follow the unit? Social media data can be collected but how does this affect the military? This is important to understand because resources such as man-hours and digital equipment are allocated for the public affairs social media plan. There are currently no published metrics for measuring social media divisional unit's success or failure.

Proposed Research Questions

How have divisional units' measure social media success?

Does the divisional social media plan reach their intended demographic with a specific purpose?

Assumptions

There are four major assumptions surrounding the divisional unit's social media plan. The first assumption is time and resources invested into social media are worth the return on investment. The second assumption is that the divisional public affairs office has a social media goal and works towards the goal. The third assumption is that the social media plan is nested with the commander's intent. The final assumption is there is currently no standardized measure of success or effectiveness that is applied consistently throughout PAO sections at the divisional level.

In addition, it is assumed division public affairs officers will share their information through interviews for this paper. The interviews will provide the background and context for all of the data collected from social media sites. Lastly, the

information collected will provide sufficient analysis for this paper but might not be able to show how social media is measured. All of the above are the researcher's assumptions.

Definitions

All of the definitions below have been taken directly from Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The language used throughout is geared to create a sense of community with the viewer. The Army uses the same language as the social media sites and has the same definitions in the U.S. Army Social Media Handbook. This is important to understand because the social media sites want viewers to feel connected to their site and use it frequently. The definitions are important to understand because this is the language used by military and civilian social media users.

Facebook: a social networking website where users can create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages and profile updates. It is the world's largest social network with more than 900 million users (as of April 2012).

Facebook Mission Statement: "Founded in 2004, Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. People use Facebook to stay connected with friends and family, to discover what's going on in the world, and to share and express what matters to them."¹⁴

Instagram: "Instagram is a fun and quirky way to share your life with friends through a series of pictures. Snap a photo with your mobile phone, then choose a filter to transform the image into a memory to keep around forever. We're building Instagram to allow you to experience moments in your friends' lives through pictures as they happen. We imagine a world more connected through photos."¹⁵

A Like is “a way to give positive feedback and connect with things you care about.”¹⁶

Social Media: is defined as “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and micro blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos).”¹⁷

Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter all have mission statements and glossaries that are specific to their websites. Similar to the military, social media websites have their own vocabulary to express what they do and how they do it.

Twitter: a platform that allows users to share 140-character-long messages publicly. User can “follow” each other as a way of subscribing to each other’s messages. Additionally, users can use the @username command to direct a message towards another twitter user. (Twitter Page)

Twitter: “Twitter is a service for friends, family, and coworkers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent messages. People post Tweets, which may contain photos, videos, links and up to 140 characters of text. These messages are posted to your profile, sent to your followers, and are searchable on Twitter search (Twitter Glossary).”¹⁸

Twitter Mission Statement: “To give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers.”¹⁹

The Twitter glossary of terms defines the following terms:

Follow (v.): “Subscribing to a Twitter account is called ‘following.’ To start following, click the Follow button next to the user name or on their profile page to see their Tweets as soon as they post something new. Anyone on Twitter can follow or un-

follow anyone else at any time, with the exception of blocked accounts.”²⁰

Follow(s) (n.): “A follow is the result of someone following your Twitter account. You can see how many follows (or followers) you have from your Twitter profile.”²¹

Organic Reach (n.): “Organic reach is the total number of unique people who were shown your post through unpaid distribution.”²²

Paid Reach (n.): “Paid reach is the total number of unique people who were shown your post as a result of ads.”²³

Retweet (v.): “The act of sharing another user’s Tweet to all of your followers by clicking on the Retweet button.”²⁴

Tagging (n.): “A tag links a person, Page or place to something you post, like a status update or a photo. For example, you can tag a photo to say who’s in the photo or post a status update and say who you’re with.”²⁵

Tweet (n.): “A Tweet may contain photos, videos, links, and up to 140 characters of text.”

Tweet (v.): “The act of sending a Tweet.”²⁶

The above definitions are directly from social media sites. The verbiage is geared to encourage people to join their social media websites.

The Army’s *Social Media Handbook* version 3.2 defines Facebook and Twitter by the same definitions from their respective web sites. Instagram is not defined in the *Social Media Handbook* version 3.2. In addition, the term social media is not defined in the *Social Media Handbook* version 3.2. Although, the social media handbook does begin the publication with the question “What is social media?”²⁷ the handbook refers to DoD Instruction Number 85550.01 as a place to find the Army’s definition of social media.

DoDI 8550.01 does not define social media but does refer to another term; Internet based capabilities (IbC):

IbC: All public information capabilities or applications available across the Internet from locations not directly or indirectly controlled by DoD or the Federal government (i.e., locations not owned or operated by DoD or another Federal agency or by contractors or others on behalf of DoD or another Federal agency).²⁸

Scope

This thesis will focus on three active component divisional units; the 101st Airborne Division, 82nd Airborne Division, and 1st Infantry Division. These three organizations will be followed through their social media pages. The divisions were picked because they have a larger followership and consistently have people like, share, and re-post their content. The aim is to determine if there is any connection between the context of posts and followership, likes, or shares.

Social media can be a controlled environment when privacy settings are added; Facebook has a multitude of privacy settings for users. The privacy settings do not apply to the Facebook pages created by the 101st Airborne Division, 82nd Airborne Division, and 1st Infantry Division because they are organizational pages which means people “like” the page in order to receive their news feed. Private group or individual pages are available to create but this entails the user to accept friend requests which grants access to their private information.

The characteristics of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter all differ drastically. Of the division social media platforms Facebook has the highest followership, Twitter came in second, and Instagram is the least viewed. As of April 9, 2015 the 82nd Airborne Division Instagram page had not been updated for 46 weeks. The 101st Airborne

Division Instagram page had not been updated for two weeks. According to the Army's *Social Media Handbook* version 3.2, if you are not posting daily, it is social media suicide on the respective site.²⁹ In addition, all social media platforms used should be updated at a minimum of every 30 days.³⁰

Although the 82nd Airborne Division and the 101st Airborne Division have Instagram accounts they are not being updated every 30 days as stated in the Army's *Social Media Handbook*. In this case, the social media accounts do not translate to positive gains for their social media brand. Regimented updates provide the public with current information and also add legitimacy to divisional social media programs.

Through interviews with PAOs, most divisional units strive to update their social media platforms on a daily basis. The social media handbook does not include detailed social media planning guidance. Since the 2009 inception of social media use across the Army, the policies have not undergone any significant changes. This is potentially harmful to the Army because social media is constantly evolving and changing.

Limitations

The limitations of this research include the lack of military material, the ability to get in contact with division level public affairs staff officers, and the short amount of time allotted for this paper. After two months of researching social media and how it affects the military, there is limited information on this subject. All of the U.S. Army social media regulations are over a year old. Aside from regulations and news articles, there is not a lot of military material. In addition to public affairs officers agreeing to interviews, the time constraint could hinder the process.

Delimitations

In order to focus this paper, I will look at three division level units social media pages and interview public affairs officers. U.S. Army Social media covers organizations of all sizes; however the time constraint will not allow enough time to sufficiently collect data on more than three units. The paper will strive to understand how division level units measure social media success. At the end of the research, the metrics might not be defined or the metrics might be different from division to division.

Significance of Study

As of 2014, divisional units do not have standardized metrics of gain or loss through social media. In the corporate world, analytics measure a company's followership and sales resulting from viewing social media. Social Media marketing companies track metrics such as consumption rates, lead generation, sales, and sharing. These metrics are then linked to profit, sales, or other measures. Companies such as Digital Sherpa, Outspoken Media, and Rocket Media provide social media analytics for companies seeking more return on investment. As stated in chapter one, social media is time and resource intensive, but is it worth it? In the military, leaders like to see measures of performance (MOP) and measures of effectiveness (MOE).

Currently, the MOP are items such as followership and "likes," tweets that include the unit's names, re-tweets, and use of the Instagram heart symbol. Unlike most of the civilian company social media sites, divisional units do not pay for social media analytics at this time. In the civilian sector, there are a myriad of marketing companies focused on social media analytics. In military terms the MOP and MOE need to be

analyzed in the social media realm. Without these two measures, divisional units may not be able to capitalize on social media.

¹ Tom Budzanya, “Social Media Shapes Markets, the Military and Life,” *DoD News*, August 31, 2010, accessed September 24, 2014, <http://www.army.mil/article/44497/social-media-is-shaping-markets-the-military-and-life/>.

² Digital Trends Staff, “The History of Social Networking,” August 5, 2014, accessed November 16, 2014, <http://www.digitaltrends.com/features/the-history-of-social-networking/>.

³ Jose Antonio Vargas, “How an Egyptian Revolution began on Facebook,” *New York Times*, February 17, 2012, accessed October 16, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/19/books/review/how-an-egyptian-revolution-began-on-facebook.html?pagewanted=all&module=Search&mabReward=relbias%3Aw%2C%7B%22%22%3A%22RI%3A13%22%7D&_r=0.

⁴ Pew Research Group, “Mobile Technology Fact Sheet,” January 2014, accessed December 7, 2014, <http://www.pewInternet.org/fact-sheets/mobile-technology-fact-sheet/>.

⁵ Linda D. Kozaryn, “Pentagon Officials Say: ‘We Want to Hear from You’,” Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System, August 17, 2009, accessed September 21, 2014, <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/37577/pentagon-officials-say-we-want-hear-you#.VWCuN8so4dU>.

⁶ Pew Research Center, “Social Networking Fact Sheet,” accessed November 4, 2014, <http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheets/social-networking-fact-sheet/>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The Economist, “A Brief History of Wi-Fi,” June 10, 2004, accessed December 23, 2014, <http://www.economist.com/node/2724397>.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Statistic Brain Research Institute, “Demographics of Active Duty U.S. Military,” November 2, 2014, accessed November 2, 2014, <http://www.statisticbrain.com/demographics-of-active-duty-u-s-military/>.

¹³ Appendix A.

¹⁴ Facebook Help Center, “Glossary of Terms,” accessed October 23, 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/help/219443701509174/>.

¹⁵ Instagram, “Frequently Asked Questions,” accessed October 23, 2014, <http://instagram.com/about/faq/#>.

¹⁶ Facebook Help Center, “Glossary of Terms.”

¹⁷ Merriam Webster Dictionary, “Social Media,” accessed November 6, 2014, merriamwebsterdictionary.com.

¹⁸ Twitter, “The Twitter Glossary,” accessed October 23, 2014, <https://support.Twitter.com/groups/50-welcome-to-Twitter/topics/204-the-basics/articles/166337-the-Twitter-glossary#>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Twitter, “The Twitter Glossary.”

²¹ Ibid.

²² Facebook Help Center, “Glossary of Terms.”

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Twitter, “The Twitter Glossary.”

²⁷ Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.1 (Washington, DC: Online and Social Media Division, January 2013), 5.

²⁸ Department of Defense, Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 8550.01, *DoD Internet Services and Internet Based Capabilities* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, September 2012), 47.

²⁹ Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.1, 2.

³⁰ Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.2 (Washington, DC: Online and Social Media Division, March 2014), 2.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Military Literature

The U.S. Army has published the following social media documents:

1. *Social Media Handbook* v 3.2 (March 2014);
2. *Social Media Handbook* v 3.1 (January 2013);
3. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 8550.01–*DoD Internet Services and Internet-based Capabilities*;
4. Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) 09-026–*Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities*;
5. Army’s Slide Share–Social Media Round Up.

The U.S. Army Public Affairs Office published the *Social Media Handbook* version 3.2 in March 2014, the fifth edition of the handbook. The previous versions were the below:

- U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* v 1 (2010);
- U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* v 2 (October 2011);
- U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* v 3 (June 2012);
- U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* v 3.1 (January 2013).

The handbook is the most recent addition to the U.S. Army’s social media guidelines. The handbook is a 52-page document that outlines the Army’s social media plan for public affairs offices and service members alike. As mentioned in chapter 1, social media is not defined in the social media handbook. The handbook does not give a definition of social media but does explain how the U.S. Army uses it. The bulk of the

handbook focuses on vignettes on how to use social media in certain situations. The situations range from deployments to natural disasters. The handbook offers guidance on establishing and maintaining social media presence.¹ There are examples of Army leaders, family readiness groups, and units that have social media pages. The handbook points out it is important to establish an official social media page to ensure no one else can use a unit or person's name to create a page. The handbook states it is mandatory for all Army organizations to register their social media sites through the Army's slide share website.² This reinforces the official social media page for any Army leader, unit, or Family Readiness Group who have a social media page. The handbook does not address how to structure a social media strategy. The handbook also addresses operational security (OPSEC). The Army has outlined mandatory OPSEC training and provides vignettes to reinforce the importance of keeping mission critical information out of social media.

The social media handbook is user friendly; Soldiers and their families are able to read and understand the Army's social media directives and best practices. The Army slide share site is the U.S. Army Public Affairs official social media website. The slide share site is a repository of social media power point presentations and all the previous versions of the social media handbook. There are not significant differences between the five versions of the *Social Media Handbook*. One major change occurred in Version 3.1, DoDI 8550.01 replaced DTM 09-026. DTM 09-026 ensures units using IbC are not violating OPSEC regulations, establish an official presence, and comply with the guidelines for unclassified website use. DoDI 8550.01 encompasses all the DTM 09-026 material and added in-depth references.

There are four enclosures that explain all of the authorities governing mandatory social media rules and suggested guidelines. The first enclosure is Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 8550.01 (dated September 11, 2012) and has replaced Directive Type Memorandum (DTM) 09-026 (dated February 25, 2011). DoDI 8550.01 is a four-page memorandum with 45 pages that house three enclosures, a glossary, tables, and figures. The DoD Chief Information Officer publishes the DoDI. The Information Officer is responsible for safeguarding information and government organizations and those who work for it. It is the first enclosure of the *Social Media Handbook* as safeguarding information and OPSEC are two items that can be easily compromised through social media. The memorandum establishes a rulebook for DoD Internet based capabilities (IbC) and DoD personnel using IbC. It establishes the following:

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction, in accordance with the authority in DoD Directive (DoDD) 5144.1 (Reference (a)) and DoD Instruction (DoDI) 5025.01 (Reference (b)) and the requirements of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-05-04 (Reference (c)):

- a. Incorporates and cancels Deputy Secretary of Defense (DepSecDef) Memorandum (Reference (d)), and Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) 09-026 (Reference (e)).

- b. Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides instructions for:

- (1) Establishing, operating, and maintaining DoD Internet services on unclassified networks to collect, disseminate, store, and otherwise process unclassified DoD information.

- (2) Use of Internet-based capabilities (IbC) to collect, disseminate, store, and otherwise process unclassified DoD information.
(Excerpt taken from DoDI 8550.01 dated September 11, 2012).

The memorandum covers how DoD employees are supposed to handle unclassified information through all facets of unclassified Internet services and websites.

The memorandum also enables units' ability to provide Internet capabilities for the sake of morale. However, the memorandum does not reference social media. Nor does it clearly state social media policies or how to use social media. In addition, the term social media is used twice in the 49 page document that is sparse for a memorandum that focuses on Internet-based websites.

In enclosure three, there is a digital link to view the terms of service with Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.³ "Terms of service are the rules which one must abide by in order to use a service."⁴ The terms of service for Twitter and YouTube are not altered for U.S. Army use. The DoD does have an amendment to the official Facebook terms of service; it states any use of the site is not for official use. This is important for the Army and its followers alike, because it is not an official communication channel and cannot be treated as such. The terms of service is to be used in accordance with DTM 09-026 (dated February 25, 2011). Although DTM 09-026 is the governing document on the terms of service; there is one discrepancy. DTM 09-026 has been replaced with DoDI 8550.01; the document has not been updated. Anyone reading the Army's Social Media Handbook will see DTM 09-026 has been replaced with DoDI 8550.01. But anyone reading any version on DTM 09-026 will not know it has been superseded with DoDI 8550.01. This is a minor detail of the document and does not change the context of the verbiage but it does show readers it was overlooked.

The Office of Public Affairs uses slide share to distribute social media information to PAOs, service members, and the public alike. The site is unclassified and is able to be searched via Google or any other web browser. The U.S. PAO publishes Social Media Round Ups to promote the use of social media on the U.S. Army Slide

Share website. The last set of slides was published on November 11, 2013. The presentations consist of slides on tips to help social media managers and those interested in better utilizing social media. The website has an ample amount of information but has not been updated in over 15 months. One presentation on search engine optimization (SEO) was posted on August 14, 2013. This is a great example of good information for division PAO sections. The presentation explains how to link a unit to keywords for better positioning on web search engines.⁵ SEO could be an important part of growing a division brand. The slide show like the ninety others on the slide share site have not been updated and do not provide division PAOs with the most up to date information needed to execute social media plans.

The presentation mentions MOE but does not outline an example or what is meant by the term. The slide share presentation titled “Is my Social Media Program Working?” explains content is worth more than metrics.⁶ The presentation lays out five considerations:

1. If this wasn't your Page or your Twitter account, would you like or follow it?
 2. What do other people see when they look at your Page?
 3. If your followers were in charge of our Page, what would they change?
 4. Do you want to increase your numbers? Do you want others to share your message? Then post good content.
 5. If you could do anything with your social media program, what would you do?
- (Taken from U.S. Army Public Affairs Social Media Round Up Slide Share)

The questions are aimed to create good content and not worry about metrics. This can be a daunting task when the MOE or MOP have not been determined. There are 91 Social Media Round Up PowerPoint (PPT) presentations on the U.S. Army slide share website. The other 14 presentations include the U.S. Army Social Media Time Line and the U.S. Army Social Media Strategy: October 6, 2010–MOH (Medal of Honor).⁷ The

social media timeline lays out what the U.S. Army has executed in social media from 2007 to 2010. The Medal of Honor strategy is a two-page presentation on how the information was distributed across social media. The table lays out the lines of effort (LOE), goal, and MOE.⁸ The MOH story was distributed through the following social media sites: Flickr, Facebook, Twitter, and a blog.⁹ The MOE were not measured against any MOP. See Appendix C for the MOH PowerPoint slides.

The Army has laid out the ground rules for IbC, EOP (social media), and how it is used. But, there are not any measures of performance or effectiveness for social media. All of the military regulations define social media at a basic level. The U.S. Army outlines the rules for units to follow when using social media. The most updated military publication is the *Social Media Handbook*—Version 3.1 published on January 1, 2013. This is important because social media is constantly changing. The social media handbook can be compared to a beginner's guide to social media. The brigade is the first level a PAO is authorized and the handbook guides battalion level and below users on how to set up social media. It also outlines OPSEC guidance and provides vignettes on how to use social media as a unit or a senior leader. The handbook does not have any guidance on the best times of day to post or how to measure social media.

On April 7, 2010, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) signed a memorandum entitled “Social Media, Web-Based Interactive Technologies, and the Paperwork Reduction Act.”¹⁰ The memorandum was a response to the Paper Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA). The PRA was created to ensure transparency between Federal agencies and the public.¹¹ It also ensures the U.S. public is not burdened by excess paperwork when contributing to federal records or websites. The OMB issues control

numbers to all federal forms that fall under the PRA. This is important to social media because the 2010 memorandum exempts social media from the PRA. This means any and all information shared on division social media pages cannot require contributor identification or burden the public. Information from social media sites is not treated as information for collection purposes.

If the U.S. Army did publish a survey on a social media site that required personally identifiable information, the survey would be controlled by the PRA. Although divisions do not use social media primarily to pull or survey their followers it is good to understand this as a PAO because any surveys including a poll or satisfaction rating are subject to the PRA. None of the military regulations and handbooks addresses the MOP or MOE. The only required standards for the U.S. Army's use of social media as prescribed in the U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* are the following:¹²

1. Social Media Pages are registered through the U.S. Army Office of Public Affairs.
2. Social Media does not violate OPSEC.
3. Personnel handling social media must go through OPSEC training.

The U.S. Army Office of Public Affairs published a memorandum to standardize social media presence on December 4, 2012. This memorandum titled 'Standardizing official U.S. Army external official presences (social media)' reiterated the Public Affairs standard for establishing social media accounts outlined in the social media handbook.¹³ The memorandum is crucial to divisional units because it establishes credibility as the official division site. From interviews with public affairs staff, it is critical to establish an official site because there will often be imposter groups who pose as a unit or a person.

The memorandum also explains how the Army “brand” is used and how to apply the rules. This is crucial because in some cases there are duplicate social media pages with the same unit name. The Army aim is to have an official page with all the correct branding for service members and the general public to view. The memorandum also states social media must be up to date and the latest post must not be more than a month old. The memorandum does not state any consequences of having social media sites with posts that are over thirty days old.

The Office of Public Affairs plays a minimal part in the DoD regulations and memorandums. Whereas, the Army concentrates on how IbC are used, the Office of Public Affairs concentrates on how to best use social media. There have not been any military publications on how social media is being analyzed or measured.

Since 1970, the Army Public Affairs Office has held the Major General Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition. The competition has 16 categories, one specifically for social media that is categorized as new media. The 2013 winner was the 1st Cavalry Division. The 1st Cavalry Division explained how their public affairs team learned to use analytics to measure the effectiveness of their social media plan. The 1st Cavalry Division PAO was able to distinguish what MOP and MOE were important to track. The write up stated interaction trumped the number of followers. The public affairs staff used the interaction rates to measure effectiveness because they knew 16 percent of their content was being shown to their followers. With only 16 percent of material reaching followers, 1st Cavalry Division was more interested in the followers who were commenting and sharing their content.¹⁴

The 1st Cavalry Division PAO also took a close look at their Facebook reach in order to tailor their content to increase interaction. Reach was measured through Facebook analytics, the posts that had the most interaction were replicated and similar story lines were posted. The results of increased reach MOP through interaction MOE gave the 1st Cavalry Division a way to measure the success of the social media program. In addition, the average age of the 1st Cavalry Division follower was 35 years old.¹⁵ The public affairs staff determined this demographic represented the unit's alumni and therefore they were able to generate stories that would resonate with them. Lastly, 1st Cavalry Division used cross promotion as a way to engage more followers. 1st Cavalry Division defined cross promotion as the use of tagging other social media users through the use of “#” and the “@” symbols.¹⁶ Cross promotion was helpful in engaging more social media users through the tagging of other organizations and events.

Army Regulation (AR) 360-1, *Army Public Affairs*, published on September 15, 2000 was written prior to 2009 when the Army authorized social media for organizations and service members alike.¹⁷ Although, the presence of social media in the regulation is outside the scope of this paper, it also does not have a part in Army Public Affairs doctrine.

In addition to the literature, the division PAO section modification table of organization and equipment (MTOE) is comprised of seven service members:

Table 1. Authorized Division Public Affairs Personnel

Position	Rank	Position Coding
Public Affairs Officer	O-5 / LTC	46A00
Senior Public Affairs Office NCO	E-8 / MSG	46Z5P
Public Affairs Operations NCO	E-7 / SFC	46Z4P
Public Affairs NCO	E-6 / SSG	46Q3P
Public Affairs SGT	E-5 / SGT	46Q2P
Public Affairs Officer	O-4 / MAJ	46A00
Public Affairs Operations NCO	E-7 / SFC	46Z4P

Source: Data exported from FMS Web - Division MTOE.

The MTOE is taken from the U.S. Army web based Force Management System (FMS Web). Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet 611-21 designates the duty description for each position with the PAO staff. All of the duty descriptions are explained by rank and position but it is important to note, this is not always followed. Each division PAO utilizes the PAO staff as they see fit to accomplish the mission. Sometimes the MTOE and the actual jobs match up but often there is more work than Soldiers in a PAO section. There is not a MTOE position or duty description for a social media manager but chapter 4 will show how divisions are managing social media with the personnel provided.

Civilian Literature

The civilian literature ranges from very basic to very complex and is constantly updated. There is a vast number of social media statistics that can be found online. Printed media is static and does not enable an author to be fluid. The latest book found and used in this paper was published in 2013. For this paper, the researcher also utilized the Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library (CARL) for social media books. In addition to the CARL research, the researcher looked through Amazon.com and Barnes

and Noble for additional social media books or informational sources. The following five books were used for this paper:

1. *The Twitter Book*;
2. *The # Social Survival Manifesto*;
3. *Social Media Explained: Untangling the World's Most Misunderstood Business Trend*;
4. *Social Media ROI*;
5. *Likeable Social Media*;

The Twitter Book explains the revolution of the hash tag (#) and creative ways to connect with customers, fans, or a follower base.¹⁸ The book is an in-depth look at how to attract followers and keep people interested in the content of your posts.¹⁹ The book shows Twitter users how the hash tag (#) can be used on Facebook through third party sites.²⁰ This enables posts on twitter to be shared to Facebook without having to copy and paste the same information. This saves time and effort for a social media manger. The book offers advice for business owners as well. The book tells business owners to engage with their customers, to provide customer support, and other tips such as linking to other sites.²¹ All of the information is written to help business owners reach more customers and ultimately change their Twitter habits to see more return on investment. Although there is not a standard for measures of performance or effectiveness, the book enables people to build a Twitter empire.

The # Social Survival Manifesto is a book geared for anyone in management who is using social media for business. The book outlines how to use social media as a professional and not succumb to negative campaigning by competitors. It also gives

business owners best practices on how to connect with the customer.²² The author notes simple explanations and sincerity are needed to succeed in a social media plan.²³ People want to trust the people they do business with and social media is a good way to get the message out.

Social Media Explained lays out the foundation of how social media is used from a marketing perspective. The first five chapters are dedicated to how social media has evolved and how it affects businesses today. The author is very conscious about the human factor in social media and underlines this fact throughout the book.²⁴ Chapter Six is entitled “What is the value of social media and how do we measure it?”²⁵ The chapter explains how tracking data points can help with return on investment but cannot always be equated to bigger gains.²⁶ The author points out search engine optimization (SEO) is not always money, it can be in the form of new business opportunities or advice from a subject matter expert who has seen the content.²⁷ The author is able to delineate how it is important to track data because patterns decrease guesswork but at the same time, tracking data will not implicitly make the company more money.

Social Media ROI looks at social media and its financial and non-financial effects on businesses. Chapters 1 through 3 focus on developing, integrating, and managing social media. Chapter 4 is focused on the measurement of social media return on investment (ROI). The author explains ROI is strictly a business measurement but it is used to measure social media more often than not. The author defines ROI as: “(gain from investment–cost of investment) / cost of investment.”²⁸ This definition is not intended for social media but can be applied in some cases. Chapter 4 explains there are six best social media measurement practices. The six practices are (1) measuring

everything you can, (2) measuring everything you must, (3) using current tools, (4) ensuring neutrality of social media manager, (5) linking everything to the business objective, and lastly (6) “test, measure, learn, adapt, repeat.”²⁹ Blanchard explains the list of everything you can measure can be infinite and the metrics that you must measure are what matters to the business. He defines “must” measures as the metrics that are tied to financial and non-financial gains in the business. Using the most current measurement tools is key as analytical companies become more sophisticated in social media measurement regularly. Blanchard states it is imperative to have control over the metrics used to measure your social media program. This entails the ability to change metrics as needed and having the software to do it.³⁰ The social media manager is responsible for the success or failure of a business social media program and must remain objective throughout the job. It is easy to be pressured into social media loopholes or let personal agendas set the stage for social media programs.³¹ After the first four best practices are put into use, the last two will follow. The items measured must tie back to the business objective, and if they do not, must be changed. The last step is the process businesses go through to find what works for them. It is largely based on the amount of effort and resources that are invested into the social media plan which leads back to social media ROI. Blanchard concludes the book by tying the social media ROI back to how much effort a business is willing to invest in social media.

Likeable Social Media is dedicated to helping people and business owners connect to their customer or fan base. The book is comprised of 19 chapters that guide the reader through how to engage people and keep them coming back to your social media sites. Chapter 12 entitled “Share Stories (They’re Your Social Currency!)” is the

chapter that stands out in the book.³² Sharing stories enables people to see a business or organization's human side and what is important to them. The book states success stories and philanthropic stories are easy ways for people to understand a business and keeps them coming back for updates and other stories. The book builds on the principles of being honest, being authentic, and admitting to mistakes. Following those guidelines will boost social media followership because people want to trust the people they do business with. The book states a solid base in those three things make a brand likeable which is the goal. Although the book does not go into specific metrics, it does provide the base plan to increase likeability. In addition to the books, there is a myriad of online articles and journals that were found online.

The most current social media articles and information is found through the Internet. This is expected because the Internet enables authors to upload their information on a constant and instant basis. *The Twitter Book* was published in 2009. Since then Twitter and Facebook have enabled their users to share content between the social media sites. Social media users with both a Facebook and Twitter account are able change their settings to allow posts to be shared on both sites.³³ In the social media world, this saves users time. Facebook posts are automatically uploaded to both Facebook and Twitter. This is the same for Twitter posts; they are automatically uploaded to both Twitter and Facebook.

There are hundreds of new statistics and analytical articles posted daily regarding social media and the people who use it. The statistics show there is an interest from American individuals and businesses alike to understand social media, how it is used, and where people spend their time. The Pew Research Center has an extensive collection of

social media statistics that outlines demographics, time spent, and most used sites.³⁴ According to the Pew study, 71 percent of adults who use social media look at Facebook most frequently, Instagram follows with 26 percent, and Twitter is the last with 23 percent.³⁵ When looking at which social media sites the division level PAOs update the most, it is consistent with the Pew Research findings. The division level Facebook pages are updated on an almost daily basis, sometimes up to four times a day. The Pew Research Center has also found 91 percent of users who use Instagram and Twitter use Facebook.³⁶ The Pew Research Center publishes an array of data points across all types of data as an independent research and polling company.³⁷ Social media has steadily been the focus of many polls and studies. It is estimated that Americans are spending an average of 40 minutes a day checking social media. The time spent on social media has risen steadily since social media was introduced to the public. One of the Pew studies has stated people who use social media are spending more time on social media than playing with their pets.³⁸ As more time is spent on-line there are more opportunities for the military and civilian businesses alike to capitalize on social media to further their messages.

The amount of time people spend on social media is analyzed heavily and civilian businesses have been able to use this information to their benefit. Analysis of the most popular time of day to the type of stories with the most success are noted and replicated to further popularity and social media rating. The demographics have been analyzed and businesses take advantage of the peak time people are looking at social media. Ad banners and promotions will appear because businesses have learned what the viewer has “liked” or “shared.”³⁹ Google also markets to their users by taking a person’s social

media habits and past Internet search into consideration.⁴⁰ This ensures a person sees specific ads while on social media. In addition to that, 84 percent of private company marketers have spent less than six hours on their social media strategy.⁴¹ With the decrease in time spent generating social media stories there was an increase in website traffic to include all the social media sites they use.⁴² This shows the social media marketing tools are doing a lot of a marketing managers job through more exposure to social media users. This is an effective use of multi-tasking social media effects. Social media users looking through newsfeeds or timelines are exposed to advertisements based off of companies paying to advertise on those websites. This shows there is valid interest in the power of social media and someone is reading the content of the articles. This is important for people or companies who use social media for positive gains such as increased marketing and sales through social media.

Google provides an analytics based program free for businesses to use. The program tracks customers across a wide spectrum of social media, websites, and Internet accessing devices.⁴³ Google analytics is able to offer businesses the ability to know their audience, track customers, and keep up with them as well.⁴⁴ There are six success stories on the Google Analytics homepage. The stories highlight how analytics have increased website traffic across social media and other online sites as well as the monetary return on investment. While the Army does not stand to gain any monetary return on investment, one of the main points of social media is to inform Soldiers, Army families, and Army personnel.⁴⁵

The military and civilian articles differ drastically because they have different intents. Numbers and statistics that are linked to fiscal gains motivate the civilian articles.

The military has not defined how to measure social media gains. The military literature aims to ensure regulations are followed and professionalism is maintained. This is apparent because there is relatively little content based on gaining followership in social media.

Stars and Stripes published a news article on December 1, 2014 warning service members to safeguard their social media sites. The article discussed the best practices to guard against identity theft. The 1st Infantry Division shared the article on their Facebook page on December 5, 2014.⁴⁶ The post received 227 likes and was shared 140 times. This post was the first post to talk about social media safety. The post was shared with other Army organizational pages. This is an example of how social media works. Within a week a post that started on one page was shared 140 times. The number of people who viewed the post was undoubtedly greater than if the post had not been shared.

The private sector does break down why social media is important to businesses of all types. The biggest link between social media and analytics is the amount of traffic to the website which correlates to monetary return on investment. There is a plethora of sites for business owners and leaders to access for social media tips and best practices. The sites include those listed above such as Digital Sherpa, Outspoken Media, and Rocket Media provide social media analytics. All of the information is fairly new (within one year) and is constantly updated. Businesses and companies also invest in the analytic tools that are available online because they can see measurable difference in profits, etc.

This leads to the research questions—How do divisional units’ measure social media success? Do divisional social media plans reach their intended demographic with a

specific purpose? Divisional units have set up social media accounts but how is social media positively or negatively affecting the unit?

¹ Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.2, 4.

² Ibid., 2.

³ Department of Defense, DoDI 8550.01, 33.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ U.S. Army, “SEO,” Official Slide Share of the U.S. Army, accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia>.

⁶ U.S. Army, “Is My Social Media Program Working?,” Official Slide Share of the U.S. Army, accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia>.

⁷ Appendix C.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Department of Defense, DoDI 8550.01.

¹¹ Executive Office of the President, *Social Media, Web-Based Interactive Technologies, and the Paper Reduction Act* (Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President, April 2, 2010), accessed November 14, 2014, https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/inforeg/SocialMediaGuidance_04072010.pdf.

¹² Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.2, 4.

¹³ Ibid., 40.

¹⁴ 1st Cavalry Division Social Media Entry for the Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition, 2013, Slide 3.

¹⁵ Ibid., 4.

¹⁶ Ibid., 5.

¹⁷ Department of the Army, Army Regulation (AR) 360-1, *The Army Public Affairs Program* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, May 2011), 31.

¹⁸ Tim O'Reilly and Sarah Milstein, *The Twitter Book* (Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media, 2009), 12.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Tom Liacas, *The #Social Survival Manifesto* (Creative Commons, 2013), 34.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Oliver Blanchard, *Social Media ROI, Managing and Measuring Social Media Efforts in Your Organization* (Boston, MA: Pearson Education, 2013), 25.

²⁵ Ibid., 32.

²⁶ Ibid., 67.

²⁷ Ibid., 43.

²⁸ Ibid., 215.

²⁹ Ibid., 197.

³⁰ Ibid., 202.

³¹ Ibid., 203.

³² Dave Kerpen, *Likeable Social Media—How to Delight your Customers, Create an Irresistible Brand, and be Generally Amazing on Facebook* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011), 141.

³³ Twitter, "Using Twitter with Facebook," accessed November 4, 2014, <https://support.twitter.com/articles/31113-using-twitter-with-facebook>.

³⁴ Pew Research Center, "Mobile Technology Fact Sheet."

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Joshua Brustein, “Americans Now Spend More Time on Facebook Than They Do on Their Pets,” July 23, 2014, accessed September 28, 2014, <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-07-23/heres-how-much-time-people-spend-on-facebook-daily>.

³⁹ Pew Research Center, “Mobile Technology Fact Sheet.”

⁴⁰ Greg Satell, “If You Doubt that Social Media Changed the World, Take a Look at Ukraine,” *Forbes*, January 18, 2014, accessed November 16, 2014, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/gregsatell/2014/01/18/if-you-doubt-that-social-media-has-changed-the-world-take-a-look-at-ukraine/>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Google Analytics, “Google Analytics Standard,” accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.google.com/analytics/ce/nrs/standard/>.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.2, 10.

⁴⁶ Christopher Carson, “Service Members Warned Anew to Scrub Social Media Accounts,” *Stars and Stripes*, December 1, 2014, accessed December 15, 2014, <http://www.stripes.com/servicemembers-warned-anew-to-scrub-social-media-accounts-1.316754>.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodology

The methodology for this paper is a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative goal is to provide a snapshot of social media statistics from September 2014 until March 2015. The quantitative analysis will give an in depth look at the time and effort put into social media from three different divisional units. From September until March, the researcher has followed three divisional unit's social media pages. The selection of three divisional units was made based on the number of followers the units had at the beginning of the study.

The researcher will examine the statistics on the social media sites to determine the overall effectiveness of the social media plan. The statistics will show the increase or decrease by month of interaction and followers. All of the statistics are open to the public and are updated on a daily basis. The researcher will collect data from the social media sites and tracking the increases-decreases in the followership-likes. The research includes analyzing the increase-decrease of "new likes," "people talking about the page" against the content of the posts. This data will provide a base line for positive and-or negative follower reactions. All of the social media sites provide data to their administrator. The administrators in this case are the public affairs officers and their staff. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter all capture a vast amount of information to include the following: Facebook provides:

1. Total number of users who are following the page;
2. Number of new users that are following the page;

3. Tracks percent value of new users (How many new Facebook users who click “follow” versus the Facebook users who are currently following the person-organization);
4. Number of users who are talking about the page.

Twitter provides:

1. Number of tweets;
2. Number of re-tweets;
3. Number of followers;
4. Number of replies to posts with the actual post content;
5. Number of users who like the post.

Instagram provides:

1. Number of posts;
2. Number of followers;
3. Number of organizations-users they are following.

The 101st Airborne, 82nd Airborne, and 1st Infantry divisions each had over 90,000 followers as of September 15, 2014. These three divisions were selected because their followership was the highest of the division’s searched and each division’s Facebook posts were consistent. The three division Facebook pages have posts with Likes and Shares that can be analyzed over time. Since September 15, 2014 the following data points have been collected from the 1st Infantry Division Facebook Page, 82nd Airborne Division Facebook Page, and the 101st Airborne Facebook Page:

1. Number of posts per day (daily);
2. Number of followers (weekly);

3. Increase of followership (weekly);
4. People talking about the respective division (weekly).

The goal of all of this data is to show how the PAO staff puts time and resources into social media through the use of Facebook. Divisional units post stories or pictures to their Facebook timelines on a daily basis. There are more days with posts than not.

Chapter Four has the information collected from September to March in graph form. This data point will show the time and effort put into Facebook as one part of social media.

The metrics of division level social media programs will be analyzed across their MOP and MOE. While the division level MOP-MOE will most likely not be aligned across the Army, it will show how different metrics provide different levels of effectiveness.

The 1st Infantry Division, 82nd Airborne Division, and 101st Airborne Division will be followed on two other social media sites: Instagram, and Twitter. The Instagram and Twitter followership is much lower than Facebook for all three divisions. The time constraint of this thesis limits the data collection. Facebook was chosen as the social media platform to follow because the site has the most activity and it was constantly updated from the three divisions. The Instagram and Twitter accounts are not updated as frequently and often share the same stories from their Facebook pages.

All of the data will provide a base for the qualitative follow up with public affairs officers and social media managers. The quantifiable data is the numbers and percentages without any MOE or context. The interviews will provide context for the statistics and background on how social media is handled at the divisional level. The connection between the data collected and the social media managers' input is the basis of the thesis. The data without any understanding of how or why social media is used will be pointless.

Public Affairs Officers and their staffs will be contacted for interviews. These interviews are critical to see how social media is used and how social media success is measured.

The goal is to understand how social media is used, how it is tracked, and if the division level public affairs offices have the social media success and reach they are working towards. In addition, it will show if goals are measured and how goals are measured.

The interviews conducted cover a wide range of public affairs officers. This paper is focused at division level social media so the interviews will be based around this level. The interviews will be broken into two categories, PAOs who have worked at the division level and those PAOs who have not. Interviews with PAOs who have worked at various levels of military organizations will show how social media is perceived at all levels. All the interviews conducted will be uniform and executed either over the phone or in person. Prior to the interviews, all of the required training and classes were completed in accordance with the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Institutional Review Board at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. The following training and class was completed prior to the start of the interviews:

1. Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)–Social and Behavioral Investigators Curriculum;
2. A211–Human Subjects Research (September 25, 2014).

All the interviews will include a signed consent form, uniform list of questions, and an explanation of the aim of the interviews. The consent form will outline the interview subject and how the study will be conducted and how the information will be used. The consent form will be discussed prior to the interview; the form must be signed in order to conduct the interview. Once the consent form is signed, a digital copy will be

kept on file and a copy will be kept with the Institutional Review Board, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas for three years.¹ The participant will have a signed copy for their records. All of the information will be written down at the time of the interview. If any of the public affairs officers approached do not want to participate, they will not be contacted again and they will not be connected to this paper. The notes will be transcribed to a digital version and emailed back to the participant to ensure correctness. The hand written notes will be shredded to ensure identity protection throughout the interview, research, and thesis process. The digital document will be kept on my laptop and password protected. Participants are able to opt out of the interview process at any time. Participants are able to opt out of having their information included in the paper at anytime. There are no penalties or repercussions for opting out of the interview process or information being included in the paper. All of the information collected in the interviews and used in the paper will not have any personally identifiable information (PII) linked to the participants. All of the information safeguard methods are in compliance with the Institutional Review Board, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

Interviews will be conducted with the PAO staff of the divisions used for the statistics. The researcher will ask questions about how they use social media and reference current PAO material. Additionally, the Facebook pages will serve as an example of how social media is used. Following the three division level Facebook pages for approximately six months, the researcher will see how much activity each division produces on their Facebook page. The researcher will also have the capability to compare and contrast the Facebook activity of the three divisions.

In addition to the three divisions followed on Facebook, the 593rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) was also contacted. The 593rd ESC is not a division unit but it is an equivalent level command. It is the senior logistics command at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) and headquarters to two subordinate brigades. The perspective of four division level units will provide a good mix of divisions across the continental United States.

In addition to those four units, it will be beneficial to interview other public affairs officers. This includes former division level public affairs officers and all of the public affairs officers in my Command and General Staff College (CGSC) class. All of the participants are school trained public affairs officers and NCOs. The only factor in the interview process is if the participant has or has not worked on a division level PAO staff. This factor will provide insight on how the public affairs officers view the division level from within their own field. Participants were contacted by the researcher or a member of the thesis committee for their consent to participate in the research process. All of the participants were given a synopsis of the paper and decided if they wanted to take part in the interview. Aside from the four divisions contacted, all of the other public affairs officers were chosen based on proximity to Kansas. There was no favorable action or payment rendered for participation. None of the participants will be named and their information will not be linked to themselves, their unit, or their position in this paper. The PAO MOS and PAO branch are very small and military readers will be able to deduce PAO personnel identities if protective measures are not emplaced. There will be enough participants to ensure all PII is safeguarded. With more than one or two participants included there will be more capacity to show trends within the PAO community. None of

the PAOs or the associated divisions will be named when any of their proprietary work is being discussed. The Facebook statistics will be shown in graph presentation and discussed in the paper, as this is public information. The overall risk to the participants is low. None of the interviews will interfere with the participant's work schedule and will be conducted after duty hours. There is no foreseeable backlash to anyone involved in this study for any information provided in support of this paper.

¹ Appendix A.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

The literature review and research set up the analysis for this paper. The literature review provided differences between how military and civilian social media are handled. There is much more civilian literature because there is a high demand for the latest social media trends. The demand is driven by a company's return on investment, most want to gain as much as possible from social media. Many civilian businesses and companies read these resources to enable higher success rates through social media. Almost all of the online articles about social media give advice on how to connect with customers and how to achieve better results through social media. Social Media ROI lays the groundwork for businesses to outline their plans and how to measure success. Business MOP-MOE are clearly stated and tracked through analytic tools and monitoring for change. Social Media ROI ensures readers understand metrics must make goals and explains how to break down social media ROI.

The latest edition of the Army's *Social Media Handbook* remains almost unchanged since the first edition was published in 2010. As stated in chapter 2, the only major change is that DoDI 8550.01 has replaced DTM 09-026. The social media training outlined in Enclosure 4 of the *Social Media Handbook* Version 3.2 is focused on operational security.¹ It is the only required training for personnel operating Army social media programs. The training ensures social media managers maintain OPSEC by not releasing confidential or classified material. The training is executed on-line and is fairly easy to complete. The online training took about 20 minutes to complete and was not graded. According to the Army *Social Media Handbook*, this training qualifies anyone to

execute social media as part of the public affairs staff. This is potentially all the training a battalion Public Affairs Representative (PAR) takes prior to starting his-her additional duty managing the unit's social media platforms. OPSEC is one of the most important components of social media and it is critical for social media managers to understand. There is no technical training or continuing education mandated for the PAO community. The training is not focused on how to effectively use social media. None of the military publications show how to set up a successful social media plan or how to measure it. This is quite contrary to the civilian literature found across print and the Internet.

The statistics and interviews provided the current social media situation across the three divisions. The goal of the interviews is to show how division level social media is executed across the U.S. Army. None of the PAOs or the units they are associated with will be named in this paper to protect their privacy.

During the PAO interviews, two of the PAOs stated measuring MOP is much easier than MOEs. The U.S. Army defines MOP as "A criterion used to assess friendly actions that is tied to measuring task accomplishment."² These PAOs considered MOP to be items such as the number of followers or the number of likes. MOPs are easily defined as tangible items such as increases in likes or increased followership. If followers and likes increase, the MOP has a positive relationship with the social media page. MOE are harder to define because the measure of success differs for each division.

The U.S. Army states an MOE is "A criterion used to assess changes in behavior, capability, or operational environment that is tied to measuring the attainment of an end state, achievement of an objective, or creation of an effect."³ MOEs are subjective to each individual division and are based on the MOPs in place. The commander is also one of

the main contributors on how MOPs are measured. One PAO mentioned MOEs are hard to establish and track because they are not linked to any tangible data. In other cases, the MOPs are not lined up to support the MOEs. One of the divisions has aligned the MOEs with the commander's LOE. When measuring this MOE, it is not easily tracked because this specific MOE needs more than likes or shares to ensure the message is being received and understood by the followers.

Social media effectiveness is hard to measure at the division level because it is not clear what the audience is thinking when they like something. The likes are measured but do not produce anything more than a number for tracking purposes. A like does not tell the PAO why a follower liked the post. There are many reasons followers like a post; which could include the mere fact that one of their friends liked the post. For divisions who want a high volume of likes, their MOP will be the number of likes per story or post. The MOE linked to that MOP could be the increase by a certain percentage or by a certain number of likes.

For divisions that are focused on increasing followership, an increase in likes is the common tool to measure effectiveness. Divisions that align their MOEs against performance measures such as information operations or LOE will not have the same effect. When the MOE is switched to track engaged followers, PAOs are able to see what followers liked or did not like through actual comments. PAOs are also able to interact with their followers through comments, which provides feedback on the post and enables the PAO to get to understand what type of posts followers' like-dislike.

The 1st Infantry Division, 82nd Airborne Division, and the 101st Airborne Division Facebook pages were followed and tracked on a weekly basis from September

15, 2014 until March 15, 2015. Instagram and Twitter were not updated frequently enough to track progress. The 82nd Airborne Division and the 101st Airborne Division have both Instagram and Twitter pages. As mentioned in chapter 1, the Instagram accounts were not current. The 82nd Airborne Division keeps their Twitter feed updated, while the 101st Airborne Division's last tweet was on April 1, 2015. The 1st Infantry Division does not have an official presence on either Instagram or Twitter. Facebook was the only social media platform all three of the divisions updated regularly. Six months of data has been compiled across the three divisions. The Facebook page statistics shows the following information:

1. Current number of followers;
2. Number of new followers;
3. Number of People talking about the Division;
4. Percentage increase-decrease of new followers.

The division PAO staff is able to see much more detail as an administrator but the tracker does show a significant amount of data. Over six months all three of the tracked divisions increased their followership. During this time frame each division had significant events happen to include deployments-re-deployments, activation-inactivation ceremonies, changes of command, training exercises, military competitions, and annual historic military operations.

In addition, each division had specific areas of focus that resonated with their followers. The 1st Infantry Division had the most likes on deployment photos, which ranged from 800 to 900 likes. For the 101st Airborne Division, air assault school graduation posts were a consistent highly liked by over 3,000 followers for every

graduation within the 178-day time frame. In addition any post with pictures during the deployment or during re-deployment ceremonies were highly liked. The 82nd Airborne Division's most liked posts pertained to airborne operations. One December 27, 2014 the 82nd Airborne Division posted video footage of an airborne operation, this post received 20,552 Likes, 29,256 Shares, and was viewed over 1,994,701 times. This video post was highly popular because the 82nd Airborne Division because most of the division is airborne, current Soldiers, and alumni connect with the footage. Similar to the 101st Airborne Division's air assault graduation and the 1st Infantry Division's deployments, the event is unique to the division and connects with Soldiers and alumni. A second order effect of this is other people liking the post because their friends liked it.

The chart below shows the increase in Facebook followership over 178 days. The 82nd Airborne Division had the biggest increase in followership; the Facebook page had an increase of 21 percent. The 1st Infantry Division had an increase of 20 percent and the 101st Airborne Division had an increase of 18 percent of followers.

Table 2. Division Social Media change in Followers

Division	15MAR14: Followers	12MAR15: Followers
1st Infantry Division	285,456	359,735 (20% increase)
82nd Airborne Division	511,475	626,423 (21% increase)
101st Airborne Division	90,713	113,768 (19% increase)

Source: Created by author, Graph Depiction of Appendix D.

Although daily posts are not required as a standard throughout the divisions, all of the divisions posted stories and pictures to Facebook on a weekly basis at a minimum.

The chart below shows the total number of days each division posted stories or pictures to Facebook. The 82nd Airborne Division posted 151 of 178 days, which equates to an 85 percent consistency rate. The 101st Airborne Division was the second most consistent at 77 percent and the 1st Infantry Division had a 65 percent post rate. From the perspective of consistency, the 82nd Airborne Division seems to have well-established Facebook posting procedures. The number of posts per day varied from division to division. One of the divisions imposed an internal standard of posting no more than two stories per day. This tactic ensures the PAO is providing relevant stories or important information to their followers versus flooding their Facebook timelines with meaningless stories. There are exceptions to this rule that include but are not limited to holiday events or public service announcements to include base/school closures and weather advisories.

There are two divisions who have command directed minimum requirements for daily social media posts and one division that did not.

Table 3. Davison Social Media change in Posts

Division	# of Days with Facebook Posts	# of Days without Facebook Posts
1st Infantry Division	116 / 178 (65%)	62 / 178 (45%)
82nd Airborne Division	158 / 178 (85%)	20 / 178 (15%)
101st Airborne Division	138 / 178 (77%)	40 / 178 (23%)

Source: Created by author, Graph Depiction of Appendix D.

The interviews provided context to the statistics and what the division level PAOs used social media for. Several public affairs service members were interviewed over the

course of two months. A wide range of public affairs officers and staff members were interviewed ranging from the rank of E-5/SGT to O-5/LTC. Through the interviews, it was found all of the divisions handle social media differently. Some divisions have one social media manager and some divisions use a group approach to social media. The divisions' who implemented a social media manager stated they spent anywhere from four to five hours on social media on a daily basis. The divisions' who used the group mentality were not able to determine the number of hours spent on social media.

The first major difference is how social media is managed on a daily basis. Some divisions take a group approach to social media. The group approach enables anyone on the PAO staff to post or tweet throughout the day. This enables the whole PAO staff to post content to division social media pages; which spreads the social media workload across the team. The divisions that use this approach did not have a set amount of hours spent on social media. Some divisions have designated a social media manager who is responsible for all social media to include planning, messaging, and posting. In addition, the social media manager is responsible for checking subordinate pages for appropriate content. One of the divisions also has the social media manager ensure all of the social media messaging is in line with the command's LOE. All three division social media programs spent between four and five hours on social media regardless of a social media manager or the group method was used.

One PAO noted significant issues that are associated with social media: imposters. Many division level leaders and other high profile military leaders often have imposters create social media pages for their own benefit. Imposters often photo shop official pictures on websites. The imposters use the photo and public information found

on the Internet to create Facebook profiles. The imposter will start to ‘friend’ people and start conversations with them. The conversations will often lead to the imposter asking for money or gifts. The imposters use the high level military leadership because they are trusted officials and people on social media are usually willing to help them.

The U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* addresses the issue of imposters and it is reinforced by Division PAOs because they are constantly searching social media for the imposter profiles. The handbook states PAOs should contact the U.S. Army Public Affairs Online and Social Media Division via email. From this point, the Online and Social Media Division contacts Facebook to have the imposter (impersonation) profile removed from the website.⁴ This process is identical to what all of the PAOs stated during interviews. Finding social media imposters takes time which all of the PAOs interviewed say is one of the biggest down falls of using social media. On a regimented basis that varies from daily to weekly, public affairs staff search Facebook for imposter profiles. Although, it is time consuming, it must be done to protect the division’s leaders and unit reputation. In addition, the handbook states it is imperative to register as an official government organization or a government official.⁵ Official pages are also required to register with on the U.S. Army PAO Social Media page, which is another way to verify official government pages.⁶

The commander’s emphasis varied from division to division but all of the social media plans were focused around the commander’s message. Some division commanders use social media to distribute information about the unit and upcoming events. Some division commanders align their social media with their LOE. The different objectives lead to two distinctly different MOP and MOE. The divisions focused on a higher

number of followers are focused on information distribution. Many public affairs staff use social media tactics such as tagging larger organizations and posting information on subordinate unit pages to increase followership. Tagging larger organizations enabled their post to reach more people who would not have seen the post. The division level public affairs staff understand the majority of younger Soldiers follow the brigade they are serving in. Divisions will use the subordinate units to push information because most of the younger Soldiers do not follow the division social media platforms. There is not a specific reason for the younger Soldiers not following the division but most PAOs say they affiliate with their current unit more so than the division.

The divisions focused on engaged followers are producing stories to create conversations through comments and sharing. Both MOP require different MOE, which can be subjective. The free analytics tell the PAO staff how many more followers they have or how many people are talking about the division but it does not give any insight as to why. Most PAOs said they would like to know what the followers want to see and what they think about the current social media trends on their pages. Likes and shares do not provide any analysis into why they liked or shared the post.

The divisions also use different metrics to measure social media reach and success. Some divisions measure success by ensuring social media messaging is in line with the command's LOE. This metric ensures all of the messaging is uniform throughout the PAO outlets and projects the LOE in a unified manner across the division. This metric also focuses on follower engagement versus increases in followership. An engaged follower shows the division PAO that the follower is active in commenting and-or

sharing the content. For the PAO staff, this is important because the commander's LOE are being talked about through social media.

One of the divisions focuses on the number of engaged users. This division defined an engaged user as someone who reads posts or tweets, comments, and shares the division's social media messages. For this division, engaged users show followers are reading social media posts and not just liking something for the sake of clicking a button. Facebook analytics show the page administrator the number of followers who are reading their content and engaging in conversation about the post. For some divisions an engaged follower is the key to success because it shows followers are reading the posts and not just absent-mindedly clicking Like because one of their friends Liked it. One of the PAO staffs uses analytics to determine the rate of engaged users. The staff is looking for people who are reading the content and sharing-commenting and not just liking it. This MOP of projecting the commander's message is in line with the MOE of higher numbers of engaged followers.

One of the division's uses distribution and followership as a primary metric for their social media plan. In this division the goal is a bigger followership. In addition, the division denotes two phases of their social media plan. The phases are based around the amount of followers. The current assessment from this division is the social media program is in the initial stage and continues to gain followership. The division anticipates moving to the next stage when they have an increase of followers to a steady regular audience. The social media manager sees this happening if the program is able to connect to people outside of the unit. This PAO assesses the division headquarters as an older demographic due to the seniority of the staff. Division staff members are not young

compared to brigade and battalion demographics. The older demographic uses social media but does not spend a majority of their time on social media platforms. One PAO stated up to 50 percent of Soldiers get their news from social media. The younger demographic is found at the brigade level and lower. Young Soldiers do not regularly affiliate themselves with their division headquarters; they do affiliate with their regimental or brigade headquarters.

From the PAO interviews, two of the division commanders require a certain number of Facebook posts and Twitter tweets posted on a daily basis. The number of required posts ranges from one to five times daily. The PAO staffs have analyzed the patterns of their followers' use of social media. Most of the public affairs staff post-tweet according to when their followers are looking at social media. Each division has a unique schedule and the public affairs staff has most divisions are using analytics as a way to improve their effectiveness over social media. Although some MOPs and MOEs do not line up with each other throughout the divisions, there are metrics in place. One of the division's is currently trying to build a bigger audience through the use of tagging. Tagging other organizations with a large audience base will enable the post to be seen and liked by more users. This division believes tagging larger organizations will lead to more people following their page based off of the content a user reads through the tag.

In an effort to standardize social media policy across the division, one PAO staff currently working on a social media policy letter outlined how social media will be handled throughout the unit. Currently, the Department of the Army does not mandate social media policy letters. Policy letters ensure all subordinate units understand the division's social media policies. One division is currently drafting a social media policy

memorandum; which outlines all everything in the Army's *Social Media Handbook* as well as any specific guidelines for the unit. This is another way to ensure social media policies are explained and adhered to throughout a larger formation.

While social media is handled differently across the divisions, they do share common issues such as the reduced organic reach of Facebook, the amount of time social media consumes, and the disparity of demographics at the division level. Organic reach across Facebook is decreasing due to more paid advertisements and less space on individual timelines.⁷ Paid advertisements are shown across a follower's timelines and crowding out division pages. All of the divisions understand this and are worried about how this will affect their social media programs. Currently, none of the divisions involved in this research are using private analytics to track social media progress. All of the divisions are using the free analytics through Facebook and Twitter. The analytics provided through Facebook and Twitter give a social media manager insight at a basic level. Many of the PAO officers said better analytics would enable them to be more specific with goals and better success because they could see more detail of how their social media plans were affecting the followers.

¹ Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.2, 49.

² Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-61, *Public Affairs* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 2010), II-10.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.2, 16.

⁵ Ibid., 11.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Facebook, “Organic Reach on Facebook: Your Questions Answered,” last modified June 5, 2014, accessed November 4, 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/business/news/Organic-Reach-on-Facebook>.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This paper answers the following research questions:

1. How do divisional units' measure social media success?
2. Do divisional social media plans reach their intended demographic with a specific purpose?

The answers to the research questions vary across the division level social media programs. Social media success is measured differently throughout the divisions. Division level social media does reach their intended demographics but does not reach the intended volume. The intended demographic throughout the divisions is younger than the current followership. For most divisions this equates to the Soldiers serving in the subordinate units. Division level social media does have a specific purpose of projecting the commander's message and-or focus. The intended demographics are different from division to division but they all reach some of the people they want to impact. The demographics vary because the division PAO and the commander use social media for different reasons. The divisions focused on reaching, as many followers are possible are not worried about the age or gender of their followers. Divisions focused on a large following are using social media to distribute military and local community information. The divisions focused on reaching the younger demographic consisting of Soldiers in their subordinate units push messages through their brigades in hopes of having younger followers. These divisions are aligning their commander's message with every social media post.

Social media success is not measured by the same standards throughout the divisions. Some divisions are focused on increasing the number of followers. These divisions attempt to reach this goal by tagging larger organizations. The intent of this process is the potential for other followers seeing the division posts that will follow the unit after seeing content from a tag. The divisions who focused on engaged users are not as worried about increasing the number of followers. Most of the division level PAOs agree engagement rates show that followers are interested in the content and posting their views about the comment. Engagement rates also show the PAO staff what the follower gained from the post. Although it might not show exactly what the follower is thinking, it is more substantial than a Like.

There is one consistent factor across the divisions; alignment with the Commander's message through the social media plan. The demographics of the divisions who want to see an increase of followership are focused on the younger age groups. These divisions understand the division followers are older due to the age group of the unit. In addition, division past members and alumni often follow the division to keep up with the unit's current events. The divisions that focus on the commander's message gauge success from follower engagement and follower interaction. The success is based off of the engagement levels, which tell the division PAO how many people are reading the posts and replying to the post. In addition to aligning social media to the commander's message, one division aligns their messages with commander's LOE. This division is focused on engagement versus followership. This is in line with the commander's LOE because the public affairs staff wants to hear from followers.

Division level social media programs are aware the demographics for their own pages are much older than their subordinate units. This information enables the social media managers to distribute information through subordinate's social media pages. Posts constructed for Soldiers will most likely not be seen by the Soldiers on the division page. According to two PAOs, the brigade level social media pages draw a younger demographic because the Soldiers tend to follow the brigade they are currently serving in because they are the most connected to that group of people. One of the main reasons this happens is due to brigade PAOs posting pictures or writing stories about the unit's deployments and training exercises. Younger Soldiers can relate to these stories and pictures because they were there and Like or Share the stories because it is about what they did. Most of the division level social media pages are filled with alumni and community members across the globe.

Former unit members follow the divisions because it gives them a sense of belonging through posts of shared experiences. Many alumni family members often look to the division social media pages because it affected their lives as well. These two groups, alumni and their family members comprise a large demographic of these historic divisions because they have been involved in countless operations throughout the years. Aside from reaching a younger demographic, none of the PAOs specifically stated any other targeted demographic. All of the PAOs understand they attract an older demographic mainly through alumni.

Using metrics such as ensuring messages are in line with the commander's messages do not always enable an increase in followership. According to one PAO, aligning the commander's message with social media often leads to followers

commenting on the posts. For this division, a larger following is not the targeted metric. The targeted metric is follower engagement, which shows how the commander's message is interpreted by followers. Social media managers understand some metrics do not line up with an increase in followership. This is important to understand because not all posts will generate increases. Some posts are intended to distribute important information about severe weather or school closures. This type of public service announcement is necessary because social media is able to reach a large number of Soldiers and family members alike. This might not be the most popular post or most liked, but it is delivering a command message across the social media platform.

The U.S. Army does not control how social media platforms operate. Division PAOs understand social media is a civilian tool and they have no control over how their posts are distributed to their followers. But the lack of control over how many people see the division's organic posts is starting to hurt their overall reach. Without paid advertising to ensure every post is displayed on each follower's timeline, division social media is likely to lose interest. The lost interest is due to the follower not seeing the daily posts. They will only see the most relevant or the post with the highest number of likes daily. Many Facebook posts are often archived due to lack of likes and shares to save a follower's time for more popular posts or paid advertisements. One way to mitigate paying for advertising is access to better analytics, which will help divisions stay connected to their followers. With better analytics, division PAOs are able to see what followers want to see more of and what they are not interested in.

Divisions benefit from social media because it facilitates distributing information to a large number of people in a short amount of time. The public affairs staff views

social media as an important tool because 74 percent of Americans use social media.¹ Unlike print such as newspaper or magazines, social media offers a way for the divisions to connect with their followers at any time. Followers are also able to share feedback with the divisions in real time through comments. This enables the divisions to hear what people like or dislike about a post or story. Another benefit to using social media is ensuring no one else is impersonating the unit. As stated in chapter 2, units using social media have to register as an official site.² An official presence ensures the unit is projecting their brand and messages to the public without being hindered by a fake profile.

This study has shown division level social media programs are dependent on the civilian sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. In order for continued social media program growth, division must have access to social media training, better analytics, and expectation management. Division level social media has progressed on Facebook and other social media platforms but will need assistance for continued social media program success. The recommendations in the below section will show how incorporating training and more resources will enable division level social media to grow.

Recommendations

To enable division level social media programs to continue their presence, there must be more focus on training, budget, and expectation management. As stated earlier, the U.S. Army's social media training program is non-existent. None of the division public affairs staff have received any formal training outside their basic course. Divisions also do not have any budget for social media related items, which hinders analysis for growth and ways to mitigate dwindling organic reach. Lastly, better expectation

management is critical for both the PAO and the commander. Currently the lack of training and budget restrict PAOs because they are not able to keep up with the constant social media evolution and change. It is hard for the division PAOs to shape their commanders expectations because they are not able to show him or her their effectiveness through the basic analytics found on Facebook and Twitter. Social media metrics are also tied to expectation management. Commanders and PAOs that are able to align their MOP with MOE will enable their social media program to flourish.

Training

There is a lack of social media training across the divisions. The U.S. Army Public Affairs programs would greatly increase division level social media success through more training opportunities and emphasis on sharing new ideas. A top down approach for the latest social media approaches and techniques could be implemented for the division level programs. The U.S. Army Public Affairs Office has used their official slide share website to post social media best practices since 2010. These best practices are packaged as power point presentations and presented as ‘social media round ups’. The U.S. Army Public Affairs Office did an excellent job of posting the “social media round ups” for over two years but stopped in 2013. The U.S. Army Public Affairs Slide Share site has over 100 power point presentations on social media topics ranging from securing social media accounts to protecting personal information. The last power point presentation uploaded to the slide share site was posted on November 1, 2013. Division level social media managers and PAO staffs would greatly benefit from periodic guidance posted by the U.S. Army Public Affairs Office. In addition, the online training could potentially lead to other training events for division social media programs. The

U.S. Army Public Affairs Office could offer division level social media training on topics that include:

1. New Social Media Trends and how to use them;
2. Training Public Affairs Representatives;
3. Social Media Analytics.

This is not an all-inclusive list but it could serve as a good start for the U.S. Army Public Affairs Office. With more emphasis on training, the division level social media programs could better utilize the man-hours that are already invested into social media.

Aside from the mandatory OPSEC training, the Army does not mandate any other form of social media training. The OPSEC training is not sufficient to ensure the division public affairs staff is effectively executing a social media program. There is currently one division that provides social media training for all incoming commanders and Soldiers.

This program is the first of its kind and ensures Soldiers and high-level leaders alike understand how to use their social media account. The training also ensures they understand how information is disseminated through social media to the division and what is acceptable to post on their social media pages. Incorporating social media training into the in-processing schedule is a great way to ensure Soldiers understand the policies and procedures in place. The social media training also addresses how to protect Facebook profiles and how to keep posts unclassified. This type of training would enable divisions across the Army to educate their Soldiers about unit specific policies and answer any questions they might have about using social media. The U.S. Army Public Affairs Office could help the divisions further this concept by including social media informational training at basic training and officer basic courses. The U.S. Army would

benefit because all Soldiers would have a chance to become comfortable with how the Army and their unit uses social media.

At this division, the incoming commanders also have another opportunity to receive social media training through their pre-command course. This training articulates how government organizational pages are a good way to get information out across larger audiences. The training also shows commanders how to make the best use of their PAR. Properly utilizing and training the PAR is essential to establish a good social media rapport throughout division level and subordinate unit's social media.

The role of the PAR is an additional duty at the battalion level. There is no mandatory training for PARs at this time. Some divisions and brigades train their PARs because it ensures the assigned service member understands what goes into social media. In addition, the training allows the PAR to see what is not accepted on social media and how to capitalize on stories. All of the divisions varied the time allocated to looking through subordinate unit social media pages for accuracy and decency. If PARs had a mandatory social media-training program, it could cut down on the PAO staff time spent on subordinate pages. It could also enable all the PARs to have a shared understanding of how to execute social media to create a wider range of effects throughout the unit.

Budget

Divisions are quickly adapting to the social media platforms but they do not have the tools to determine if they are meeting their goals. There is emphasis on more analysis now because organic reach is dwindling. With the organic reach decrease, only highlighted stories will be shown to followers.³ The highlighted stories are the most popular or relevant posts from the day or week. The popularity or relevancy of the

Facebook posts also depends on the follower. Facebook analytics determine what posts a follower will see based from past patterns on the website.⁴ Facebook states posting every story to a follower's timeline is often overwhelming for the follower and takes away from engagements.⁵ Facebook also suggests developing relevant content that engages followers.⁶ Although Facebook makes a point to develop relevant content, without higher quality of social media analytics they are not able to pinpoint what the followers want to see.

All of the divisions resource their social media programs differently because there is no MTOE position for a social media manager. This factor enables the division PAO to execute their social media program, as he or she feels fit for the unit within the parameters of the commander's guidance. According to PAOs, the division public affairs staff or designated social media manager spend a minimum of 80 hours and a maximum of 100 hours per month focused on social media. Based on the current 2015 Defense and Finance Service (DFAS) military pay chart, 80 man-hours a week equates to \$1,232.00 in base pay for a social media manager in the rank of E-5/sergeant or \$1,437.60 for a social media manager in the rank of E-6/staff sergeant.⁷ The calculations do not include the housing or subsistence allowances, special pay, or incentives. The long-term cost of social media if a division is using a social media manager is equivalent to the pay and compensation of a sergeant, staff sergeant, or another rank that is filling the position. For the divisions that use the group approach to social media, the man-hour cost is hard to calculate because there is a large mix of different ranks included. With divisions spending between 80 to 100 hours a month on social media, more effective training will enable better social media skills and save time through more effective posts (stories).

Facebook's dwindling organic reach is another reason better analytics will become important to division PAO staffs. Without analytics they will not be able to see specific details of how their Facebook page has been affected by the shrinking organic reach. All of the PAOs see the decrease in organic reach as a negative impact on their social media programs. In addition, PAO staffs could save time by using social media analytic companies to track their effectiveness. If divisions had access to better analytics, the PAO staff could analyze what followers like to see, when they like to see it, and how issues such as limited organic reach is affecting their social media program.

The social media analytic companies discussed in this paper are not data mining for personal information. They collect aggregate information to inform businesses on how their posts and stories are affecting their customers. Through the interviews, none of the PAOs interviewed currently pay for social media analytics. All of the PAOs stated they did not have the budget to pay for the services. Most of the PAOs stated access to better analytics would enable the divisions to give their followers better social media content. The U.S. Navy was the only service to use paid analytics in 2013.⁸ The U.S. Navy paid for and used Radian6, a private social media analytic company to measure follower engagement and conversations.⁹ Radian6 focuses on customer or follower engagement by analyzing public information on social media platforms. All of this is legal because the information is on public sites.

In 2012, two Naval Post Graduate School (NPS) students created a data-mining platform focused on social media using sentiment analysis for intelligence collection.¹⁰ The students used Facebook and Twitter to build a network that links user comments and user sentiments to areas across the world. The students were able to build and constantly

update these networks in real time using the analytics versus intelligence analysts. Sentiment analysis is legal by federal law because all of social media is public information but there are ethical concerns from military and business leaders alike.¹¹ Although, this project was based on gathering intelligence, the U.S. Army Public Affairs office could possibly look into building an analysis system. This would allow the U.S. Army to tailor their own standards of success since it wouldn't be based off of a civilian set of metrics. This would also enable the U.S. Army to train the PAO branch by themselves. This type of analysis system would cut down on resources spent on civilian analytics and enable more training opportunities for the PAO branch.

The Federal Trade Commission governs U.S. social media law, which focuses on protecting social media user privacy.¹² The FTC also enforces how companies execute social media advertising and how they collect personal information from social media users.¹³ The U.S. Army does not fall under the private sector and a lot of this does not apply but it is important to note there are laws in place to protect social media users. Federal laws state if social media profiles do not have any privacy protection selected, an employer or anyone else on the Internet may legally peruse the information.¹⁴

The analytics the divisions want to access are not for intelligence collection purposes. Companies such as Radian6 use sentiment as one of the factors they track but the information is used for increasing a company's sales not to track specific people around the world. Sentiment analysis used for business versus intelligence collection is a fine line and currently there is no federal statute to deny this type of analysis. Although it is not illegal, many argue privacy laws are violated in this type of analysis. Last year, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) director stated social media is the newest signals

intelligence and a huge open source collection platform.¹⁵ The director also stated social media is not always correct but it is a good place to gather information in a short amount of time.¹⁶ Similar to the private sector, many argue this type of social media data mining is in violation of privacy laws.¹⁷ Regardless, the U.S. Army needs to adequately resource division social media programs. Without better analysis or training, the division social media programs will not be able to stay relevant or competitive on social media platforms. The U.S. Army Public Affairs Office would increase the effectiveness of division level social media programs through better analytics by enabling the PAOs to spend less time figuring out what followers want to see and more time building the stories or engaging with their followers.

Expectation Management

All of the PAOs interviewed said expectation management is key in enabling a successful social media program. The commander has to understand what social media can and cannot do. Most PAOs stated their commanders did not fully understand the potential of social media. This can hinder division social media programs due to restraints a commander might put on the public affairs staff. As discussed earlier, more training and better analytics could enable commanders the opportunity to have a realistic view of what social media is able to do for the unit. If commanders were exposed to social media for their organizations earlier in their careers it could increase their comfort level and ability to utilize the tool.

Unrealistic expectations about social media can be addressed and mitigated through more exposure to social media prior to taking battalion or brigade command. Leaders who understand how social media works are able to capitalize on this powerful

tool to distribute messages and connect with people. Leaders who understand how to use social media at the battalion and brigade level will be more prepared to execute division level social media. All of the PAOs interviewed agree social media training for commanders and leaders is needed to stay informed about current and emerging social media trends. The training could also be a great way for PAOs to show how they execute social media and to field questions from commanders. A shared understanding of social media and the efforts needed for the program are critical in making the program work.

The research and study of division level social media has shown social media differs from unit to unit and there is not a consistent metric to measure them against. All of the social media goals are slightly different which signify different metrics and analysis. All of the programs strive to gain bigger followership to get the unit's message out to the biggest demographic possible. While all division social media plans are not the same and do not have the same goals, they are focused on reaching a bigger demographic and getting the commander's message out.

In addition to this, published guidelines on how divisions will better align social media measures of performance and effectiveness will provide better feedback to the public affairs staff. This will help the public affairs staff communicate the division's social media program metrics to the commander. All of the divisions have a different focus but military publication framing how to associate MOP with MOE would help focus their efforts. Currently the approach to social media per the U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* version 3.2 is similar to Army Doctrine Publication (ADP 5-0). ADP 5-0 frames the operations process through the military decision making process (MDMP). MDMP is a linear process that focuses on a set of processes that are executed in

numerical order. The U.S. Army *Social Media Handbook* does the same; it frames how a social media program should be executed in a process of steps. If the PAO community had a military publication that approached social media from an operational design perspective as stated in Joint Publication (JP) 5-0 it would enable a free flowing thought process. A publication focused on operational design applied to social media would give the division PAO staff more ideas and flexibility to be more creative with their program. Operational design would require more interaction between commanders and subordinates to create shared understanding, identifying problems, and finding solutions.¹⁸ This operational design process is a way division PAOs could communicate their social media strategy and end states with their subordinate units.

Due to the constant evolution of social media, the publication could be in the form of an official Army blog for PAOs and social media managers to contribute their thoughts and opinions. The basis of a publication would add a better shared understanding of social media issues and enable the U.S. Army Office of Public Affairs to better serve the division social media programs. An Army publication that linked social media MOP to MOEs and associated metrics for each would help divisions build their social media plans.

This chapter of the study showcases the work all of the divisions are currently doing to move their social media programs forward. This chapter also shows the gaps that are currently inhibiting the division social media programs from growing at a faster rate. If division level social media programs are expected to keep progressing, more training, a more robust budget, and expectation management need to be managed accordingly. Division PAOs and their staffs are making the most of the little resources they have on a

daily basis. In order to make division level social media better, the division PAOs must have access to better analytics to enable them to reach more followers and attract more followers. Division public affairs staff need more than an OPSEC class to successfully execute social media. An hour of on-line training does not give anyone on the public affairs staff enough knowledge to manage a social media program. As noted earlier in this chapter, division social media programs currently do not have a budget. The budget for most division social media programs would be spent on better analytics, which would help institute more focus in the program. This study has raised more questions about division level social media that could be the basis for future research.

Areas for Further Research

This study has exposed areas for further research. Division level social media needs more focus from the U.S. Army in order to be effective in the future. The list below is a handful of topics that could be studied to bring positive change in the division level social media programs:

1. The need for a social media budget at division level;
2. Use of Analytics in U.S. Army social media programs;
3. How Commander's drive the use of social media;
4. Potential Changes to U.S. Army Public Affairs social media policies.

¹ Pew Research Center, "Social Networking Fact Sheet."

² Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, *United States Army Social Media Handbook*, Version 3.2, 4.

³ Facebook, "Organic Reach on Facebook."

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ DFAS, “Military Pay Chart 2015,” accessed April 1, 2014, <http://www.dfas.mil/militarymembers/payentitlements/military-pay-charts.html>.

⁸ Ann Peru Knabe, “Social Media Measurement: How the U.S. Military Evaluates Success in its Social Media Programs” (Paper, National Defense University, AY 2012-2013), 31.

⁹ Salesforce, “Radian6 Marketing Cloud Introduction,” accessed May 9, 2015, <http://www.salesforce.com/us/developer/docs/marketing/MarketingCloudRadian6Introduction.pdf>.

¹⁰ Kerrey Davis, “US Military Looks to Social Nets for Intelligence Strategy,” IDG News Services, November 10, 2012, accessed May 9, 2015, <http://www.techhive.com/article/2013726/us-military-looks-to-social-nets-for-intelligence-strategy.html>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Jennifer Quittner, “How to Avoid the FTC’s Ire when Advertising on Social Media,” Inc, October 22, 2014, accessed May 10, 2015, <http://www.inc.com/jeremy-quittner/social-media-advertising-rules-all-about-transparency.html>.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Theodore F. Claypoole, “Privacy and Social Media,” *Business Law Today*, January 3, 2014, accessed May 10, 2015, http://www.americanbar.org/publications/blt/2014/01/03a_claypoole.html.

¹⁵ Julian Barnes, “U.S. Military plugs into Social Media for Intelligence Gathering,” *The Wall Street Journal*, August 6, 2014, accessed May 10, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-military-plugs-into-social-media-for-intelligence-gathering-1407346557>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 2011), Executive Summary.

APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

Division Level Social Media

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

This is a research study conducted in support of a Master of Military Art and Science thesis (MMAS) focused on division level social media. This form provides information to you on your rights as a research participant in the above named study and of the responsibilities the researcher has during this study. The Combined Arms Center Leadership Development and Education (LD&E) has approved this study and supports the research.

Purpose of the Research Study

The purpose of this study is to look at division level social media programs to answer the following questions: How have divisional units' measured social media success? Has the divisional social media plan reached their intended demographic with a specific purpose?

Procedures

1. The expected number of participants is between 4 and 7.
2. The expected duration of the subject's participation is 30-60 minutes.
3. As a participant, you will be asked to:
 - Read and Sign this Consent Form prior to the interview
 - Conduct a 30-60 minute interview via phone, video, or in person
 - Refrain from discussing classified information or potential violations of the UCMJ or criminal law
4. After transcript preparation, you will have an opportunity to review your data prior to its use in the study's report.

Risks

Participation in this study is low risk to you. The risk of revealing personally identifiable information (PII) has been mitigated. I will remove all PII from your data and I will not disclose any PII in the paper. While there is a risk that you might reveal information that could cause you reputational harm, this risk is low. I will have you verify your information prior to including it in the report to prevent sharing information that might harm your reputation and I will avoid revealing information that might lead a reasonable person to discern your participation in the study.

Benefits

This is a research study and there is no expectation that you will receive any direct benefit from participation.

Compensation

Participants will not be compensated for their participation.

Confidentiality

Although confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, the researcher will attempt to keep

confidentiality throughout the interview process and the report. All data obtained about you, as an individual, will be considered privileged and held in confidence; you will not be identified in any presentation of the results unless you wish so. Complete confidentiality cannot be promised to subjects, particularly to subjects who are military personnel, because information bearing on your health might be required to be reported to appropriate officials. The Human Subjects Protection Office or a DoD designee may inspect the records at any time.

These specific steps will be taken to maintain confidentiality for you:

- All interviews will be kept digitally and password protected.
- All interview notes will be shredded after digitally reproduced.
- All Consent Forms will be kept digitally and password protected; a copy will be kept at the LD&E IRB for three years.
- Participants will not be named in the paper, nor will there be enough information included in the paper to deduce a specific individual's involvement with the paper.

All data related to this study will remain secured digitally and password protected for a period of not less than three years from the approval date for the research study.

Contacts for Additional Assistance

Should you have any concerns or questions about the study either before or after your participation, you may contact the following for assistance.

1. Principal Investigator: Kristyn Kifune at kristyn.m.kifune.mil@mail.mil
2. CAC LD&E Human Protections Administrator (Dr. Maria Clark at maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil) or the LD&E IRB Chair (Dr. Dale Spurlin at dale.f.spurlin.civ@mail.mil).

Voluntary Participation

Participation in a research study is voluntary. Anyone who is asked to be in a research study may always say no. No one has to become a research subject. If you start a research study, you may stop at any time. You do not need to give a reason. No one can discriminate against you or treat you differently if you choose not to be in a research study or later decide to stop your participation.

Statement of Consent

I have read this form and its contents were explained. I agree to be in this research study for the purposes listed above. All of my questions were answered to my satisfaction. I understand I will receive a signed and dated copy of this form for my records.

_____/____/____
Signature of Research Subject Date

Printed Name of Research Subject

_____/____/____
Principal Investigator Signature Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions (for PAO / Social Media Managers)

1. How have divisional units you have worked in used social media?
2. How have these units measured social media success or reach?
3. Knowing what you know now from that experience, what if anything would you change for future use and guidance?
4. How has social media impacted your organization? How do you measure the results?
5. What has been the purpose of using social media in your organization?
6. What are your social media goals for your organization?
7. How have you defined these goals? Have they changed over time?
8. How have you measured progress towards your goals? What metrics do you use?
9. What guidance have you given your social media manager/PAO?
10. What has been the biggest gain/benefit through the use of social media?
11. What have been some pitfalls/drawbacks in your use of social media for yourself or your organization?
12. Can you quantify the resources that your command devotes the use of social media (man-hours, dollars, etc.)?
13. Has social media been worth the time and resources invested? Is there a quantifiable ROI and is there a way to measure it?
14. Are there other meaningful metrics by which to measure the effectiveness? (MOEs and MOPs)
15. Knowing what you know now from that experience, what if anything would you change for future use and guidance?

APPENDIX C

MEDAL OF HONOR SLIDES–U.S. ARMY SLIDE SHARE

U.S. Army Social Media Strategy: October 6, 2010 – MOH

Theme:	<i>Medal of Honor recipient SSG Robert Miller</i>
LOE:	<i>Soldiers and Families</i>
Flickr/Photo of the Day:	<i>Photo of the Day: Official Medal of Honor poster (over 3100 views, over 2400 clicks) Flickr: SSG Sweetnam created a Medal of Honor Set-10 photos in set, over 3400 views (excluding Official MOH poster)</i>
Facebook:	<p><i>Facebook post 1: Photo of the Day: Official Medal of Honor poster-(posted 0830)</i></p> <p><i>Facebook post 2: Staff Sergeant Miller's extraordinary valor ultimately saved the lives of seven members of his own team and 15 Afghan National Army Soldiers in Barikowt, Afghanistan. Visit http://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/miller/ to learn more about SSG Miller and to view the "battlescape" - a video re-creation of his acts of heroism and selflessness.</i></p> <p><i>Facebook post 3: SSG Robert Miller graduated from the U.S. Army Special Forces Command (Airborne) Qualification Course Sept. 26, 2004, and the Special Forces Weapons Sergeant Course March 4, 2005. View the White House Ceremony awarding SSG Miller's parents the Medal of Honor LIVE today at 1:45 EST (link to White House site).</i></p>
Twitter:	<p><i>#USArmy Photo of the Day: "Medal of Honor" http://bit.ly/bgmy5B. Today, President Obama will posthumously award the Medal of Honor.</i></p> <p><i>Visit http://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/miller/ to learn more about SSG Miller and his acts of heroism and selflessness. #USArmy</i></p> <p><i>In less than five minutes, SSG Miller will be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. Watch the ceremony http://bit.ly/9a1k56</i></p> <p><i>Speaking of #USArmy SSG Miller, President Obama said, "The courage he displayed that day reflects every virtue that defines his life."</i></p> <p><i>President Obama to #USArmy SSG Miller's Family: You gave your only son to America and America is forever grateful.</i></p>
Blog:	<i>Repurposed Army's STAND-TO! Included hyperlinks to STAND-TO!, microsite, and Flickr page (MOH photo set).</i>
Army.mil:	<p><i>SSG Robert J. Miller Microsite: http://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/miller/</i></p> <p><i>Live stream of White House ceremony featured on Army.mil Homepage</i></p>

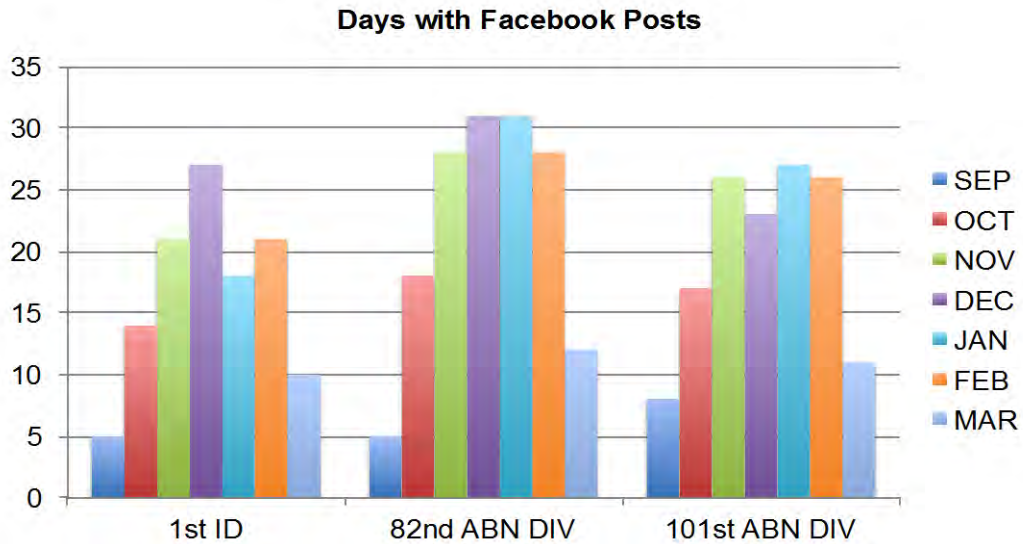
STAND-TO!:	<i>Wednesday, October 6 edition of STAND-TO! focuses on the Medal of Honor http://www.army.mil/standto/</i>
Other:	<p><i>Through SSG Sweetnam's official Facebook account, posted general MOH post to listed Official pages:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>62nd Airborne Division</i> <i>1st Infantry Division</i> <i>1st Cavalry Division</i> <i>1st Armored Division</i> <i>3rd Infantry Division</i> <i>1st Brigade 101st Airborne Division</i> <i>Go Army</i> <i>III Corps and Ft. Hood</i> <i>3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division</i> <p><i>Estimated reach of over 100,000 fans</i></p>
Goal:	<i>Brittany attended the White House ceremony and LIVE tweeted from the event see metrics of tweets above. To educate & inform audience about Medal of Honor recipient SSG Miller's story of heroism and selflessness.</i>
Measures of Effectiveness:	<p><i>Facebook post 1: 1048 likes, 97 comments, 159,869 Impressions, 0.71% Feedback (as of 1430)</i></p> <p><i>Facebook post 2: 833 likes, 85 comments, 143,087 Impressions, 0.64% Feedback (as of 1430)</i></p> <p><i>Facebook 3: 424 likes, 54 comments, (as of 1430)</i></p> <p><i>Tweet 1: 31 retweets</i></p> <p><i>Tweet 2: 27 retweets</i></p> <p><i>Tweet 3: 31 retweets</i></p> <p><i>Tweet 4: 14 retweets</i></p> <p><i>Tweet 5: 26 retweets</i></p> <p><i>Note: 25 mentions (specific to MOH)</i></p>

Source: U.S. Army, "Official Slide Share of the U.S. Army," accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.slideshare.net/USArmySocialMedia>.

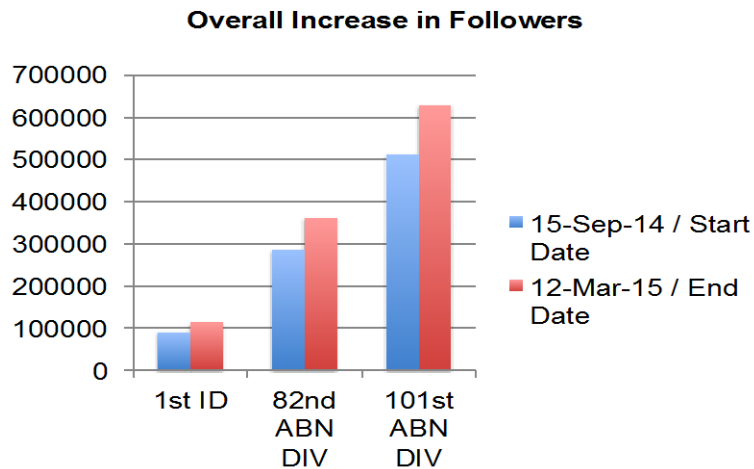
APPENDIX D

SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS

CHARTS



Source: Created by author.



Source: Created by author.

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